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Leza L Olson 08/31/2006 09:18:11 AM From DB/Inbox: Leza L Olson

Cable  
Text:

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 03457

SIPDIS  
CXTela:

ACTION: ECON  
INFO: IPSC SCI IMO CONS RES POL DCM AMB AID FCS PD  
ADM

DISSEMINATION: ECON  
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:RJONES  
DRAFTED: ECON:RRUFFER  
CLEARED: DCM:GCRETZ, ECON:WWEINSTEIN

VZCZCTVI399  
OO RUEHC RUEHXX  
DE RUEHTV #3457 2421540  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 301540Z AUG 06  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6008  
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 003457

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/30/2016  
TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IS](#)  
SUBJECT: SPIEGEL DENIES RAFAH CLOSED TO PRESSURE PA TO  
RELEASE SHALIT

Classified By: Ambassador Richard H. Jones for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (U) Ha'aretz reported today, August 30, that the IDF and Shin Bet recommended six days ago that the GOI keep Rafah crossing closed to pressure the Palestinians to release kidnapped soldier Gilad Shalit. Ha'aretz apparently obtained a copy of a transcript from a Ministry of Defense (MOD) meeting where the recommendation was made, and the article claims that this is the first time that it has been proven that Rafah has been closed for reasons other than terror alerts.

2. (C) Brig. Gen. (ret.) Baruch Spiegel and Lt. Col. Oded Herman told EconCouns and econoff on August 30 that the crossing is not closed to pressure the Palestinians to release Shalit. They said that this is not the MOD's official position, and that the meeting cited above was only a preparatory meeting to begin working on the extension of the Rafah mandate, which expires in November. Spiegel said that he and others wrote a strong recommendation to Defense Minister Amir Peretz to open the crossing on a continuous basis as soon as possible, and that Peretz will be evaluating the recommendation today or tomorrow.

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JONES